

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A tape reel comprising:

a hub having a cylindrical shape; and

an upper flange and a lower flange respectively provided at an upper end and a lower end of said hub,

wherein a magnetic tape is wrapped around an outer peripheral surface of said hub, and

means for gradually decreasing a distance between said upper flange and said lower flange outside ~~[[an]]~~ the outer peripheral surface of the hub, as said magnetic tape is being wrapped around said hub, by deflecting said upper and lower flanges towards each other over an entire circumference thereof.

2. (Original) The tape reel as set forth in claim 1, wherein a lower face of said upper flange is inclined upwardly towards an outside in a radial direction of said tape reel, and an upper face of said lower flange is inclined downwardly towards the outside in the radial direction of said tape reel, when said magnetic tape is unwrapped.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.116
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3. (Previously Presented) The tape reel as set forth in claim 1, wherein a distance between an upper end of an outermost layer of the magnetic tape in a width direction and a lower face of said upper flange is defined as H3, and a distance between a lower end of the outermost layer of the magnetic tape in the width direction and an upper face of said lower flange is defined as H4, said distances H3 and H4 always remaining within a certain range such that the magnetic tape does not contact either of said upper flange and said lower flange.